

Intro: Sometimes small things can make a HUGE impact!

When the final report came in, the conclusion was that the failure of "O" rings was the fatal flaw that brought the space shuttle Challenger down...losing 7 people their lives, impacting the entire nation, including hundreds of thousands of school children, costing billions of dollars in loss, and suspending the shuttle program for 2 years, That "O" ring was ¼ inch in diameter.

Sometimes very small things can have a HUGE impact! That is what the prophet Micah tells us in ch 5 vs 2. Read it with me..."But you, Bethlehem...."

1. Small is Not Insignificant: Bethlehem was the PERFECT Place For The Son of God To Be Born!

Bethlehem is a perfect example of that principle. Look at the reality of Bethlehem in the time of Jesus

- **SIZE:** At time of Jesus birth 300- 500 people!
- **HISTORY:**
 - ~Setting for Book of Ruth: Prophetic foretelling of Kinsman Redeemer (Boaz/Jesus)
"The closest male relative who is responsible to act on behalf of a relative in danger or need!"
 - ~Birth Place of King David: Greatest King of Israel: Prophetic "type" of Jesus
- **Name Meaning:** City of Bread/Food Jesus "I am bread of Life!"
- **Cultural Impact:**
 - ~Water: Aquifer for Jerusalem for 1000's years: Jesus said "I am Living Water" Never Thirst!
 - ~Sheep: Because of water and fields: Place where Lambs for Temple sacrifice raised! 5 miles
John The Baptist: "Behold the Lamb of God!"
Lamb: That was BORN IN BETHLEHEM; Became Bread of Life, Living Water all Who trust Him

APPLIC: Yes, Bethlehem was small, but it was the perfect place for the Lamb of God who would bear the sins of the world to be born! God intentionally picked Bethlehem as the TOWN FIT FOR A KING!

2. Small Things Can Have A Big NEGATIVE Impact!

"When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled: "A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more." Mt 2:16-18 (Possibly 12 of 300-500)

Can you imagine the heartbreak, grief and sorrow that took place in the little town of Bethlehem after the killing of the children. All the boys 2 yrs and undertaken in one day. Unimaginable grief and pain. A small town...but with enormous grief! Small things can have a huge impact. That is just at true in our SPIRITUAL LIFE as it was for Bethlehem. Small things can easily destroy us spiritually, just like Herod devastated Bethlehem **BIBLE SAYS**

- **Sg of Sol: 2:15** *"Catch for us the foxes, the little foxes that ruin the vineyards, our vineyards that are in bloom."*
Allegory of Love: Little things that can destroy a marriage...or a relationship if left to grow unchecked.
- **Psm 139:23** **Subtle Sin:** *"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts."*
The "not really wrong...but not really right" things in our life: Ones we excuse...Rationalize
Bad Temper: "They deserved it" OR "That's just the way I am"
- **Psm 19:12** **Hidden Sin:** *"Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults."* (No one sees!)
The ones we KNOW are wrong...but don't release. The ones we hide from others...and self
Cutting corners on Contracts; Pornography; Hidden inappropriate relationship...
- **Heb 12:15** **Root of Bitterness** *"See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many."*

Anger, Resentment, you hold over something in past: (Drinking poison, hoping other person)

Applic: We all have those small sins in our life that are subtle, hidden, or overlooked. We convince ourselves that "It will be OK" and they won't hurt us too badly...but it isn't true! Over time, as small as they might be...Destroy us!

- **Eccl 10:1** *"As dead flies give perfume a bad smell, so a little folly outweighs wisdom and honor."*
- **1Cor 5:6** *"Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough?"*
- Oak tree and my sidewalk

Small things can have an incredible NEGATIVE impact...especially over time. Destroy us...one small piece at a time!

3. Small Things Can Make A Huge Positive Impact!

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this." Is 9:6-7

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem it was the culmination of thousands of years of prophecy, the outcome of the Eternal plan of God from the foundations of the world, and the beginning of the life of Jesus impact ETERNITY! All of that was held that day in the small town of Bethlehem...300-500 people...and one small baby boy.

Such a HUGE POSITIVE IMPACT from one small town...and one small baby!

- Second Temple Being Built Zech 4:10 *"Who despises the day of small things? (Glory 2nd temple GREATER)*
- Jesus Said it this way: Luke 16:10 *"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much..."*

As I was studying this I created a list of 8 "SMALL THING" that can have a HUGE POSITIVE spiritual impact

1. A listening Ear: Rom 10:17 "So faith comes from hearing...and hearing through the word of Christ!"
It is so powerful to be HEARD...Not fixed..Not answered...not told...HEARD! LISTEN THIS WEEK
2. A caring Touch: Matt 8:3 "Jesus reached out and touched the man (leper) "I am willing" he said."
Reduces Stress, Lowers blood pressure, reduces pain, helps with everything
3. A positive word: Prov 25:11 "A word at the right time is like apples of gold in a network of silver!"
Change perspective, Inspire to do best, encourage, strengthen, build up
4. A small gift: Luke 21:3 "Truly I say to you, This poor widow has given more than all of them!"
The widow gave from her heart...Some of greatest gifts are not large or valuable (PS Hugs!)
5. A short prayer: Mark 10:47 "Jesus, Son of David, Have mercy on me."
Foster teaches us to write 5 to 8 words...single syllable: :Lord Jesus, Help me trust your goodness."
6. A cup of water: Matt 25:40 "Whatever you did for the least of these , you did for me."
7. Small Faith: Matt 17:20 "Faith as small as a mustard seed can move mountains!"
We all want more faith...what we need is to put our faith in a big God!
Your faith can be small when your God is big!
8. Small Obedience 2Kings 5:14 "Then Naaman went down and 7 times in the waters of Jordan, and was healed"
Most of us want to do something large...what we need to are those small acts of obedience!"

Illus: What impacted me the MOST on my trip to the Holy Land...Trip to Nazareth...(Comparable in size to Bethlehem)
"Of COURSE they didn't believe He was the Savior of the world!

But from that small town, 300 to 500 people, overlooked and ignored by the mighty Roman Empire...Eternity Changed
The Roman Empire rose...and fell...and the Church of Jesus Christ continues to grow and spread...touches eternity!

Small things can make a HUGE IMPACT:
Here is my challenge for you THIS WEEK!

1. Pick ONE...either POSITIVE or NEGATIVE "SMALL THING" in your life...and focus on it all week!
Maybe you want to say...I am going to LISTEN...I am going to give...I am going to speak POSITIVE words..

Maybe you want to say...That NEGATIVE thing...that small sin, subtle sin, hidden sin...devastating my spiritual
life...and this week with God's help...I'm going to work on that all week long...I'm going to trust Him for victory.

Here is what I want you to do...Pick one...right now....and while we sing...You make your commitment...In your
seat...down front alone...or with me...or at the Prayer Tent.